



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BOARD OF REGENTS RELEASES NURSING INITIATIVE ANNUAL REPORT

Program Exceeds Legislature's Nursing Enrollment Goal by 103%

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents released the first annual report for the Kansas Nursing Initiative – a 10-year, \$30 million state funding and matching grant program that was approved by the State Legislature and signed into law by the Governor in 2006. The nursing initiative's goal is to combat Kansas' looming nursing shortage, and, in its first year, the program achieved the following results:

- 507 additional nursing students were admitted in FY 2007;
- 28 full-time and 23 part-time additional nursing faculty were hired;
- 53 Nurse Educator Service Scholarships were awarded; and
- 27 human patient simulators were placed into nursing classrooms.

“After the first year of implementation, the results clearly indicate that the Board's nursing initiative has been an overwhelming success. With the results already achieved, the state's 22 public nursing programs have taken a major step forward in addressing one of Kansas' most pressing workforce development issues – an issue that only increases in importance as the state's population continues to age,” said Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO of the Kansas Board of Regents. “The Legislature should be applauded for its foresight and for investing critical state resources in this initiative. In addition, I would like to thank the six organizations that have been our hard-working partners in making this program such a success: the Kansas Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the Kansas Association of Nurse Leaders, the Kansas Board of Nursing, the Kansas Health Care Association, the Kansas Hospital Association, and the Kansas State Nurses Association.”

The nursing initiative utilizes a combination of grant and scholarship programs to increase the capacity of existing Registered Nursing (RN) programs in Kansas. The first component of the program aims to increase the availability of qualified nursing faculty in public postsecondary nursing education programs through the Nurse Educator Service Scholarships program where scholarship recipients agree to engage in the full-time teaching of nursing in a Kansas nursing program after receiving their Masters in Nursing or Doctorate degree. The second component, the Nursing Faculty Salaries and Supplies program, allows nursing programs to apply for grant funds to increase the number and retention of qualified nursing faculty and for consumable supplies used in nursing programs. The third component, the Nursing Equipment

and Facility Upgrades program, assists nursing programs in obtaining new technology, equipment or space to accommodate increased program capacity.

The annual report can be found on the Board's website at www.kansasregents.org.

Background:

The 2005 Legislature, concerned about the shortage of nurses in Kansas, recommended that the Board report to the Governor and the 2006 Legislature regarding the resources required to increase the capacity of the state's higher education system to educate registered nurses by 25 percent. The Legislature also requested that the report include a timeline for building the infrastructure necessary to accommodate up to 250 more nursing student admissions annually.

Among the causes for the nursing shortage in Kansas is an increased utilization of the health care system by an aging population at the same time many existing nurses will be retiring. The Kansas Department of Labor predicted that 6,890 new Registered Nurse (RN) positions will be needed by 2010 to meet the workforce demand. An additional 4,460 RN replacement positions will be needed due to retirements, for a total projected need of 11,350.

Implementing nationwide strategies and initiatives within the state, Kansas has been successful in attracting individuals to careers in health care. The pressing issue now does not revolve around filling the pipeline with students interested in nursing careers, but rather expanding postsecondary program capacity for those who want to become trained nurses. Virtually every nursing program has an extensive waiting list of qualified applicants. Increasing capacity in nursing programs is a complex process that consists of acquiring additional qualified nursing faculty, securing additional clinical instruction sites, and increasing classroom space and equipment.

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six universities and a coordinating board for nineteen community colleges, ten technical institutions, and a municipal university. In addition, the Board administers the state's student financial aid, adult education, GED, and career and technical education programs. The Board also authorizes private proprietary schools and out-of-state institutions to operate in Kansas, and administers the Kan-ed network, a statewide network that provides broadband Internet access and distance learning capabilities for schools, hospitals, and libraries.

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